

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6246

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Authorizing travel expenses for closed industrial insurance claims.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development (originally sponsored by Senator Honeyford).

Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development

House Committee on Commerce & Labor

Background: Workers injured in the course of employment may receive various benefits under the Industrial Insurance Act, including payment for medical care directly related to the accident. With limited exceptions, an injured employee will continue to receive Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) benefits until the claim is closed. Claims are generally closed when the injured employee's doctor or another physician certifies that further treatment will not improve the condition, L&I has no information showing further treatment is needed, or the injury was minor and treatment was successful.

Travel costs for health care treatment related to the claim may be reimbursed when the injured worker is required to travel more than ten miles one way from his or her home, no other provider of the same type is available closer to the injured worker's home, and the claim manager has pre-authorized travel.

Mechanical appliances required as permanent equipment after treatment has been completed must continue to be provided or replaced without regard to the date of injury or the date treatment was completed.

Summary: Injured workers must be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses when travel is required in order to repair, replace, or alter a prosthetic, orthotic, or similar permanent mechanical appliance after closure of the claim.

The reimbursement provisions do not cover travel for the repair or replacement of hearing-aid devices.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	2
House	96	0

Effective: June 12, 2008